

The Hartford Catholic Worker

St. Martin De Porres House
St. Brigid House



"I really only love God as much as I love the person I love the least." -Dorothy Day



Dwight Teal Jr.
Angel of Hope

It is not true that violence and hatred should have the last word, and that war and destruction rule forever—

This is true: Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, his name shall be called wonderful counselor, mighty God, the Everlasting, the Prince of peace...

So let us enter Advent in hope, even hope against hope. Let us see visions of love and peace and justice. Let us affirm with humility, with joy, with faith, with courage: Jesus Christ—the life of the world."

Daniel Berrigan, S.J.

Testimony: The Word Made Flesh

Advent & Christmas 2020

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The Hartford Catholic Worker is published quarterly by the St. Martin De Porres Catholic Worker community. We are a lay community of Catholics and like minded friends, living in the north end of Hartford, working and praying for an end to violence and poverty. We are a 501c3 tax exempt organization. We do not seek or accept state or federal funding. Our ability to house the homeless, feed the hungry, and work with the children depends on contributions from our readers. We can be reached at: 18 Clark St., Hartford CT 06120; (860) 724-7066, purplehousecw@gmail.com and www.hartfordcatholicworker.org We are: Brian Kavanagh, Baby Beth Donovan, Dwight Teal Jr., Sasean Sanders, Jacqueline, Ammon, and Christopher Allen-Douçot.

Jorge the Church Janitor Finally Quits

Martín Espada

Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1989

*No one asks
where I am from,
I must be
from the country of janitors,
I have always mopped this floor.
Honduras, you are a squatter's camp
outside the city
of their understanding.*

*No one can speak
my name,
I host the fiesta
of the bathroom,
stirring the toilet
like a punch bowl.
The Spanish music of my name
is lost
when the guests complain
about toilet paper.*

*What they say
must be true:
I am smart,
but I have a bad attitude.*

*No one knows
that I quit tonight,
maybe the mop
will push on without me,
sniffing along the floor
like a crazy squid
with stringy gray tentacles.
They will call it Jorge. Ω*



Summer Camp

Diamanna Lilly Dulaire

(Proud grandpa note: Lilly, who is 8, was inducted into the O'Brien STEM Academy Good Behavior Hall of Fame in 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019)

*Some people have a lot of fame, some people think it's just a shame.
The marshmallow sticking to the graham cracker and the chocolate tastes like chocolate batter.
When I step on the ground the ground is damp, can you guess what it is, it's just camp.
When the scary stories fill my heart, it sounds like my brain is breaking apart.
After we eat the food that is divine, when we go to bed we stand in line.
After we watched the birds catch things with their beaks, then we go and play hide and seek.
Share this poem with all your friends but I am sorry to say goodbye. THE END!!*

Christopher J. Douçot

Blessings and greetings from the Hartford Catholic Worker, also known as The Green House by our friends and neighbors. We have never “corrected” our neighbors when they have called us The Green House instead of St. Brigid House or The Catholic Worker because friends have nicknames for each other that break through formalities to reveal trust and mutuality in a relationship. I love it that the kids call me “Pops” and not Mr. Douçot, and I am privileged to call them “Pito”, “G-Baby”, “Kewi”, “Mo mo” and more.

The Green House, and the Purple House too, is not a social service agency, and we are not social workers. Rather, the Green House is a community, hopefully a glimpse at what Dr. King called the Beloved

Community, and we are neighbors being neighborly. Neighbors share. When we first opened our doors in 1993 our broad intention was to perform the Works of Mercy on a daily basis, and in a personal manner. The Works of Mercy (housing the homeless, feeding the hungry, teaching, being patient, comforting the ill, visiting the imprisoned, and more) are really instructions on how to “love our neighbors as ourselves”.

We expected to always be sharing our home, and our food, but we left the specificities of which Works we would perform, and how we would perform them, undetermined trusting that the contours of our work

would become clear as we built mutually loving relationships with our new neighbors. This pursuit of right relationships is shalom, the pursuit of peace.

Our north end neighborhood is almost entirely nonwhite and it is one of the most impoverished neighborhoods in the nation. This is not an accident, or the fault of our neigh-

borhood, or to borrow our bike pump. Over the ensuing 27 years this has evolved into after school tutoring; Saturday sports, nutrition, and art; a bike repair shop and sharing hundreds of bikes; and summers fishing and swimming at Beach Pond in Voluntown.

As our relationships with our neighbors expanded and deepened, so too did our relationships with the generous people from the suburbs who were supporting our work with their gifts of time, talent, and treasure. It soon became obvious to us that the neighborly thing for us to do was to introduce these two groups of people to each other on radically different terms than they might have encountered beforehand. It has become even more obvious that this has been the most important thing we have done.

The Green House quickly became a welcoming,

safe space for neighbors separated, and at times alienated, by race, class, geography, and generation to be (re) introduced. As some of these relationships enter their third decade we have seen the Beloved Community emerge as: folks from these different communities have moved into each other’s neighborhoods, become: lovers, “big” sisters/brothers, workout buddies, teammates, classmates, students at Northwest Catholic and East Catholic high schools and at UCONN, ECSU, and CCSU, adopted grandmas and pas, colleagues, housemates at the Purple House, helpers after school, mentors and

(Please see: *Appeal*, p9)



Kewi, Bubba, Lilly Shiz, Saquina, Riley the wonderdog, Pito, and Rosa-lini from way back in the day. (clockwise from top)

neighbors, but the result of centuries of white supremacy and public policies that enriched white America while isolating nonwhite America (e.g. [The practice of red lining](#)). Our first priority in 1993, remains our highest priority today, that is- we are still seeking to be neighbors and neighborly.

Over the years we have shared our homes with hundreds of homeless persons, and we have shared food with thousands of hungry persons. We have also, unexpectedly, been drawn into community with the children of our neighborhood who began knocking on the door to pet our dog, ask for an apple, help with

Christopher J. Douçot

Despite the gnawing feeling that we are stuck in a perpetual Groundhog's Day, minus Andie MacDowell's charm, we are just a few weeks from Christmas and New Year's Day 2021. January 3, 2021 will also be my 53 birthday; a few weeks back I wasn't sure it would be a happy birthday, or that I would be here for it. Two years ago I had 4 discs removed from my neck. The doctor's hoped this procedure would restore full feeling and strength to my hands, and relieve the chronic pain in my shoulders. Unfortunately, my symptoms got worse, by July the neuropathy was no longer just tingling in my fingers it was causing shocks in my cheeks- if any of you ever put your tongue on a nine volt battery, that's what my cheeks felt like. I was supposed to have more surgery in March but due to the pandemic it was pushed back until September.

For my second surgery the docs went in through the back of my neck. They cut off four laminae and inserted a bunch of nuts and bolts. The scar is like ten inches long, but since it's on the back of my neck I've been spared Frankenstein jokes so far.

Unfortunately, two weeks after

the surgery the wound had still not fully closed. Instead of feeling better, every day I felt worse. Eventually I had a fever of 105 and was brought to the hospital. The first antibiotics I took gave me a rash, the second caused "[Red Man syndrome](#)" As my body became swollen and red- picture a crimson [Violet Beaugregade from Willy Wonka](#) and the Chocolate Factory, a specialist with an ultrasound machine was brought in to start an i.v., a task made more challenging because I was dehydrated, or so I was told after two nurses and four previous pokes failed. It turns out I was also septic. My night ended with an hour long ambulance ride to Hartford Hospital, the tech leaning over me for the entire ride welcomed me by telling me it would be OK for me to remove my mask because the "[Corona virus is not as bad as they say]", I can't wait for that bill... or their patient satisfaction survey.

I spent a week in the hospital. I had a couple of MRI's, the second one I don't remember, too many more needles, and another surgery. I'm home now. My wound is closed, my pain is manageable, my strength slowly returning, and my cheeks are no longer shocking me. All in all, I guess this is a success story- and

people accuse me of not only seeing the glass as half empty but also as being cracked!

We often cite Dr. King's vision of the Beloved Community when we write about the community that gathers at the Hartford Catholic Worker. That Beloved Community is saving my life. My dear bride Jackie overcame her unease with blood and guts to change the dressing on my wound after my I was discharged with my metal neck. It was she who took note that the wound wasn't closing. Jackie has been working overtime for nearly three months now taking care of me.

It was my daughter Morlianna, a nurse, who asked if I had a fever and prompted Jackie to buy a thermometer. It was Morlianna's daughter Lilly, who was staying with us, who took my temperature every morning.

It was my daughter Marisol who took me to a wound specialist, and then spent an entire day caring for me to give Jackie a break. Morlianna and Marisol came to us as teenaged guests twenty years ago. Over time they became a part of our community taking shifts "on the house". By the time they moved out they were our daughters. A few years back they both told us, unbeknownst to the other, that Jackie and I will never



The Beloved Community??

end up in a home because they will care for us! We could not be more blessed.

It was Jackie's childhood friend Beverly, also a nurse, who came over to change my dressing and check my vital signs many nights after work. On the night I went to the emergency room Jackie called Bev and Morlianna, for advice because the on-call surgeon was not returning our call (turns out he was in emergency surgery). They both told Jackie to take me to the hospital immediately, but I kept refusing to go (delirium or male pattern stubbornness? Maybe both?). Nurse Bev ended the stalemate when she came over and took me to the hospital. These amazing women saved my life.

Being out of commission also kept me away from the office and my other duties at the Catholic Worker. After my return to the office was further delayed by my return to the hospital Baby Beth learned how to use new software and took care of the office work. If you are a donor and we were late in acknowledging your generosity, please forgive us. Also, if you receive an end of year tax receipt letter from us make sure we cite the correct amount of your donations- at one point Beth and I were each entering data and we may have made a couple of mistakes... I am also grateful to Cullen, Ammon, Dwight, and Sasean for taking care of the buildings and grounds and for taking extra house shifts while Jackie was home caring for me.

As I type the Supreme Court is hearing another challenge to the Affordable Care Act. Jackie and I have health insurance because of the Affordable Care Act. There is no way the Hartford Catholic Worker could afford to provide health insurance to our community members. Why ought health care be contingent upon employment anyways? The ACA is not ideal. Even with the government subsidy we pay hundreds every month towards the premium,

and my recent travails could cost us tens of thousands of dollars! Again, the Beloved Community has come to the rescue as dear friends and supporters are helping me out. By the way- people who receive health insurance also receive a government subsidy, albeit unacknowledged. The value of health insurance is a significant portion of the compensation that a worker with employer-based health insurance receives, but it is not considered income and is thus not taxed. Whereas, if an employer were to increase the pay of a worker who is covered under the ACA



My crack medical team when I turned red.

to help with their premium that increase in pay would be taxed. This is maddening. Health care is not an industry, patients are not customers. Health care is a human right that should not be contingent upon employment, citizenship status, income, or profit margins.

So, I'll leave you with this. September and October are the best fishing months of the year. A trip to Long Island Sound during these weeks anglers will come across schools of bluefish, stripers, false albacore- football sized fish that peel line off your reel at 40 mph!, Bonito- a delicious football sized tuna fish, and Spanish mackerel. My surgeries left me benched during the fishing world series. Everyday Micah was fishing from his kayak after work well into the night. He was catching so many fish but kept telling me white lies about how slow the bite was, until his ruse was

blown by the 38" lunker he brought⁵ home. This past weekend I felt good enough to go out on one of the local party boats. It was a beautiful, clear day in the 70's, in November! The water in the Sound was perfectly flat. We were bottom fishing for tasty Tautogs. Despite teeth that look like a baby teeth, if babies had buckteeth, 'togs have a subtle bite making them maddeningly hard to catch. While Micah and I were busy feeding crabs to the 'togs, Jackie sent us a worried text. She had been awakened by an earthquake and

there was a tsunami warning in the area we were fishing. The tidal wave never came but about an hour later we looked up to see acrid black smoke billowing out of the Millstone nuclear power plant. The captain joked: "no limits today, keep as many as you catch". When the smoke continued to rise, he got on the radio and learned that after the earthquake Millstone restarted it's diesel generator and thus the smoke. (note to Millstone: tune up that generator and clean that smokestack, or at least provide nitroglycerin tablets for your neighbors who might have heart attacks the next time you crank up that filthy beast!)

It was a peak 2020 morning. Earthquakes in New England, a nuclear power plant that seemed to be melting down, and a gorgeous (climate changed) November morning with my son catching fish. I still think the glass is half empty and cracked, but I'll acknowledge that the glass is also half full on the bottom and only cracked at the top. I'm not a fan of the kumbaya, toxic positivity so in vogue with some folks. Suffering is real and all around us, but so too is the Beloved Community. Denying, or minimizing, suffering doesn't lessen it's sting; only the gentle embraces of those who love us can do that. So wear your mask, and get your vaccine when it's available, so you can again hug and be hugged! Ω

(Reprinted with permission from *The Catholic Register of Toronto*.)
Luke Stocking

The pandemic has led to a resurgence in the tradition of family board games – including one called Pandemic. My own family has favoured a word association game called [Codenames](#). There is another game on our shelf though that I find myself thinking about these days – Monopoly. There are many different versions of Monopoly – over 1000 according to one source. There is even a “Catholicopoly.” It was an unofficial version with very limited distribution. The aim was to “spread the Word of the Lord” by building churches and cathedrals and instead of going directly to jail you go directly to confession. Cute. I wonder though, what a serious Catholic version of the game would look like – one that applied principles of Catholic Social Teaching on economics as opposed to the monopolistic ambitions of capitalism.

In my work with high school students, I have often used the game of Monopoly to illustrate our mission at Development & Peace. That mission is to address the root causes of poverty and injustice in the world by applying the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. I start by asking them what their winning strategy is for the game. Despite the variations in their answers, they all admit that it is impossible to win the game if you only own the cheapest property set. Then I ask students to raise their hand if they have ever given another player in a losing position money so they could continue to play the game. There are always hands raised. When I inquire as to the motivation for doing so, usually their responses speak to feelings of compassion or wanting the game to continue. Their compassion usually only goes so far though. Very

few students are ever interested in giving others some of their property sets instead of cash when I suggest that as an alternative solution. “But Sir, I don’t want them to win!” That is fair enough when you are playing a game. But we are trying to be Catholics in a world where such things are not a game. The analogy helps me to explain to students an important difference between



two types of charitable giving. One type – giving a player money so they can pay the rent when they land on someone’s property - allows people to simply survive in a socioeconomic system that is designed to prevent their success. The other type of giving – giving a player property deeds - requires a sacrifice from those who benefit most from that system by sharing their source of power in a more equitable way.

Monopoly was originally called The Landlord’s Game and was patented in 1904 by a woman named Elizabeth Magie to show people how the collecting of rents impoverishes tenants and enriches property owners. So, the game is one whose origins are not without some irony.

The reason the game has been on my mind recently is because the United States Justice Department recently filed a lawsuit that accuses

Google of maintaining an illegal monopoly over search and search advertising. The New York Times quoted the agency as calling it, “the most significant legal challenge to a tech company’s market power in a generation.” It is part of a growing concern in the United States over the concentration of corporate power. According to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the balance of power between small and big business has significantly shifted since the 1990’s. Companies employing more than 1000+ people account for more than 40% of all U.S. employment while those with fewer than 100 employees account about 35%. Studies show that the rise in concentration of corporate power in the U.S. have also slowed or stopped gains for every economic class except the very rich.

Canadians are often fond of comparing ourselves favourably to our neighbours to the south - a habit I can happily contribute to here. According to Statistics Canada, by comparison, small businesses account for 69.7% of the private labour force versus 10.4% for large businesses.

God did not create the gifts of the earth as prizes in a competitive board game of winners and losers. We were not created with the object to see who among us can own everything to the point that other people can no longer play the game. Catholic Social Teaching calls for limits on the accumulation of wealth in so much as that accumulation prevents the promotion of the common good. As the [Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church](#) teaches us, “Christian tradition has never recognized the right to private property as absolute and untouchable: on the contrary it has always understood this right within the broader context of the right com-
(Please see: *Monopoly*, p9)

Just Give Poor People Money

7

Jina Moore

When the United Nations World Food Program won the Nobel Peace Prize on Oct. 9, newspapers and television programs around the world illustrated their stories with quintessential images of food aid: Huge sacks of rice or flour, stacked high in a field tent or moving, bag by bag, atop someone's head.

These days, those sacks are almost quaint. Last year, nearly 40 percent of World Food Program assistance wasn't food at all. It was cold, hard cash.

In 2019, the WFP handed out more than \$1.2 billion in cash and more than \$860 million in vouchers to nearly 30 million people in 64 countries. And while the WFP is the biggest humanitarian player to use cash

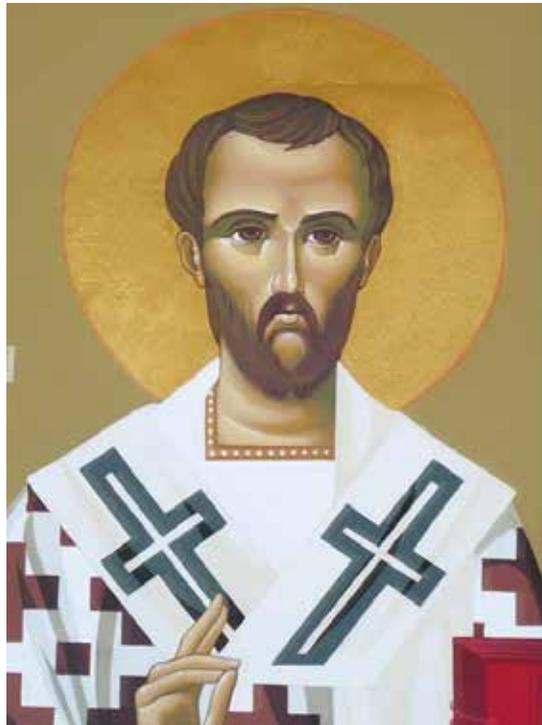
handouts, it's hardly an outlier. What was once a fringe idea has moved to the humanitarian mainstream. Cash or vouchers now account for about one-fifth of all humanitarian aid.

A decade of data shows that giving people cash instead of food or other in-kind aid empowers recipients, is harder to steal, and pumps money into local economies. In some settings, recipients' assets, nutrition, and even survival outcomes increase. "There are lots of good reasons to deploy humanitarian cash transfers," says Kenn Crossley, WFP's global cash transfers coordinator, "but at the bottom line, cash can empower people to address their own priorities."

In the last three years, humanitarian organizations have doubled their cash and voucher programs, giving out \$5.6 billion last year, according to

an annual survey by the Cash Learning Partnership, or CaLP, a network of 90 humanitarian groups around the world. "Fifteen years ago, we were five organizations trying this weird new thing: What if we just gave cash to people?" says Sophie Tholstrup, policy coordinator with CaLP.

What became apparent is that



"The rich are in possession of the goods of the poor, even if they have acquired them honestly or inherited them legally."

St. John Chrysostom (c. 349 – 407)

the recipients would prioritize their needs and spend money in ways that set themselves up for the long term. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tholstrup says, families might skip a meal in order to send a child to school. "It's a terrible choice to have to be making, but families were able to choose, and it struck me that that's where the decision-making power should be," she says.

Cash is also less prone to diversion or outright corruption. Cash distributions are often digital, and deposits are more discreet and more difficult for middlemen to steal. You can't hold a village's worth of mobile money deposits hostage at a rebel checkpoint. But even inside humanitarian aid groups, that part of the story hasn't taken hold yet. More

than one-third of the humanitarians CaLP surveyed last year think the risk of fraud or corruption is still too high, despite growing evidence to the contrary, Tholstrup says.

Indeed, irrational feelings about cash may have been the biggest obstacle to getting it in people's hands. For decades, the assumption has been that poor people will make

poor financial decisions. [GiveDirectly](#), a pioneer in giving cash to impoverished families in East Africa, encounters the assumption so often that it keeps a disclaimer near the top of its "about" page: "No, people don't just blow it on booze and women."

In fact, a 2018 US Agency of International Development study of cash giving in nutrition programs in Rwanda, conducted in partnership with GiveDirectly and other

assistance groups, found that households that got cash instead of standard aid packages saved 60 percent more, consumed 32 percent more, and expanded productive assets like livestock by 76 percent more. Cash recipients' diets improved, and so did their children's height, weight, and chances of survival.

"Cash has been robustly evaluated over 200 times at this point," says Michael Faye, co-founder and president of GiveDirectly. "I think we often end up holding the poor, the recipients of aid, to a higher bar than we hold ourselves to, and that shows up when you hear the question, 'Why cash?' I think we should start with recipient empowerment and choice and ask, 'Why not cash?'"

(Please see: *Give Money*, p8)

Give Poor People Money, cont.

When the coronavirus pandemic hit, GiveDirectly expanded its efforts to collect individual and corporate donations and distribute them to people in need in places such as Rwanda, Uganda, Liberia, Malawi, and Kenya — lower-income countries where the economic fallout of the pandemic hits especially hard.

In Kenya, that money has made a big difference. GiveDirectly

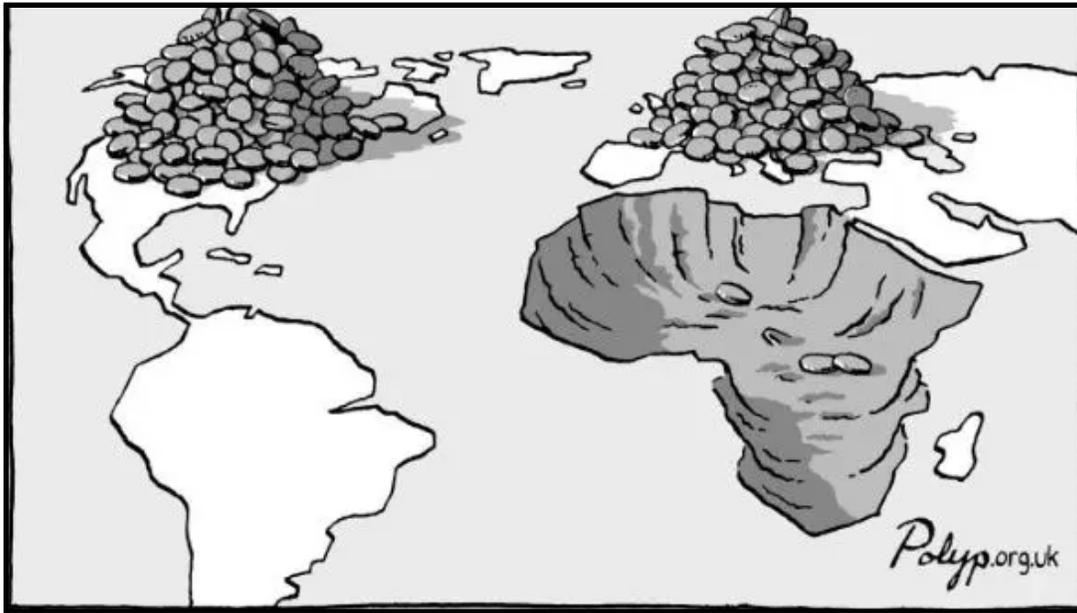
partnered with Shining Hope for Communities ([SHOFCO](#)), a community-based organization that works in 11 low-income neighborhoods. GiveDirectly provided cash — \$30 once a month for three months — and SHOFCO identified families most in need. Nearly 35,000 families got a total of more than \$2.4 million.

In the places SHOFCO works, which residents nonjudgmentally refer to as slums, even a small sum goes a long way. Kenya's slums are also the economic engines of the country. They're the places rural people settle when they look for low-wage work as minibus conductors, baggage handlers, newspaper hawkers, or busboys. Since the beginning of the pandemic, more than 90 percent of those workers have lost some of or all of their income. A mere \$30 a month can keep the rent paid or an extended family fed.

That, in turn, keeps a community alive. Every unrestricted dollar of direct giving creates \$2 of value in local economies, according to several studies. There's no comparable multi-

plier effect from handouts of food or other goods.

For Kennedy Odede, who grew up in Kibera, Kenya's biggest slum, this is not just an abstraction. "I love numbers," he says, "but I also believe the data you see with your eyes." He's seen people use cash grants to buy flour and onions and tomato paste from local vendors, who are often also their neighbors. Those vendors,



in turn, feed and clothe families, including ones well beyond the edges of Kibera.

"When there's no money in the slum, there's no money in the village," Odede says.

SHOFCO is well known globally, thanks in part to Odede's bestselling memoir, "[Find Me Unafraid](#)," which he wrote with his partner, Jessica Posner. His renown and track record have helped him access more funding than many community-based organizations, and in the pandemic, Odede and his team have put those resources into overdrive. SHOFCO has given away more than 11 million gallons of water and nearly half a million bars of soap. It's screened 1.8 million people for COVID symptoms at its community clinics and in door-to-door campaigns. It has set up 342 handwashing stations, which

have been used more than 44 million times.

And yet, when donors call on Odede, even with his track record, they aren't offering to write him checks. Instead, they offer Odede more things — more hand sanitizer, more masks, more soap. Those things won't go very far without manpower, which costs money. "We can't just work on an itemized list of supplies," he says. "This coronavirus is a war. And you'll make sure I have hand sanitizer, but you don't care

if we have soldiers."

The humanitarian cash "revolution" still has an Achilles heel. Although cash or vouchers now account for nearly 20 percent of the \$29 billion given out in humanitarian aid each year, only one

dollar out of a thousand is given to community-based organizations like SHOFCO. Outfits like GiveDirectly, which work with groups like SHOFCO to reach the right people, are small players. Many large donors are still withholding trust and money from local leaders and organizations that can identify and help the people who are most in need.

"At the moment," says Tholstrup of the [Cash Learning Partnership](#), "we're still clinging to the way we used to do business."

(Jina Moore, a journalist based in East Africa, has written about health, human rights, and politics from more than 30 countries.)

Boston Globe October 18, 2020

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Monopoly, cont.

mon to all to use the goods of the whole of creation: the right to private property is subordinated to the right of common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone.”

A Catholic version of Monopoly would be one that never ends be-

cause it would not be premised on economic domination that results in only one winner. Instead, its rules would ensure an equitable ownership of its properties that never allows any one player to force others out. As a competitive board game, it would likely not be a best seller. As a lesson in how to promote the

common good through an equitable distribution of ownership though, it would be most instructive for us Catholics.Ω

(Luke is Deputy Director of Public Awareness & Engagement, Ontario and Atlantic Regions, for Development and Peace. He also volunteered at the HCW during a high school service week back in the 90's!) Ω

Brian Kavanagh



St. Martin's Wish List

A cure for those infected with COVID

- ☪ A cure for those infected with racism
- ☪ A safe, effective vaccine for COVID
- ☪ Donations in support of our work. Checks can
- ☪ be made out to HCW and sent to: 18 Clark St. Hartford, CT 06120

A couch for our neighbors

- ☪ A small coffee table, 2 end tables and an easy
- ☪ chair for one of the buildings at our summer camp.
- ☪ Flat, white, twin sized sheets.
- ☪ If you can help with any of this send us an email: purplehousecw@gmail.com

Appeal cont.

proteges, members of our board of directors, godparents, and just plain, ole friends. The divisions in our society may be deep but the relationships formed at the Green House are deeper.

The Hebrew prophet Micah made clear that our work is to “[do justly, love kindness and mercy, and to walk humbly with our God]”. Especially today this can seem like an insurmountable task which is why our Jewish cousins remind us that though we are not “obligated to complete this work” neither are we “free to desist from it”. Indeed, we believe that our neighbors are the clearest reflection of God in our midst- to walk humbly with our God is to walk with our neighbors kindly doing justice as the Beloved Community.

Until there is a vaccine, we have shifted our work to reduce the number, and duration, of close contacts we have with people who are not living with us. We still have guests

sharing our homes with us, but being neighborly in a pandemic has forced us to close our doors to the kids and volunteers who gathered here as a community. We do not want to expose anyone to this virus. We have also closed our emergency food pantry. Our work is now focused on helping to keep our neighbors housed, warm, and fed. With the help of the Srs of Mercy, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the archdiocese of Hartford, and especially individual donors we have been: helping our families with back rent, and their heat and light bills; we have been sharing meals prepared by Trinity College, Moral Mondays CT, and St. James Episcopal church from West Hartford; produce donated by Chrysalis Center; and Stop and Shop gift cards purchased with your donations; we have shared several laptops with the school children to assist with online schooling and we hope to purchase a Kindle for every child in our Beloved Community; we

have put money on the commissary accounts of the incarcerated loved ones from our families so they can call home and buy food to supplement their rations; we continue to do ad hoc social work; and we continue to work and pray for peace.

We will continue to share food and Stop and Shop gift cards but with Thanksgiving and Christmas approaching, and heating season already here, we are depending upon your financial support if we are going to help our families keep the heat on, the rent paid, and still be able to put a few gifts under the tree for their kids. “Yes”, the need is vast, “no” we will not complete it, but “maybe” you can help us persist!

Practice Resurrection Always,
Recognize Incarnation in AllΩ

“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

Maya Angelou

Notes From De Porres House

Jacqueline Allen-Douçot

Advent is a time of faithful waiting. This Advent we seem to be waiting for many things. Our community waits for a time when we can safely have the children in after school. Our family waits for Chris to be healed from the surgery and infection that followed. The country waits for the racist president to acknowledge that he lost the election.

The people wait in the hope that the next president will stand by his campaign promises and make changes to the systems of government that have been oppressing the poor, people of color, and this lands' original inhabitants. The nation waits for a vaccine that can protect from Coronavirus. The earth waits to see if we will finally take seriously climate change and the environmental degradation wreaked by our industries and militaries .

Mostly God waits.

God waits for us to use our hands and hearts to reflect the Light and Love that have been poured into us by the power of The Holy Spirit.

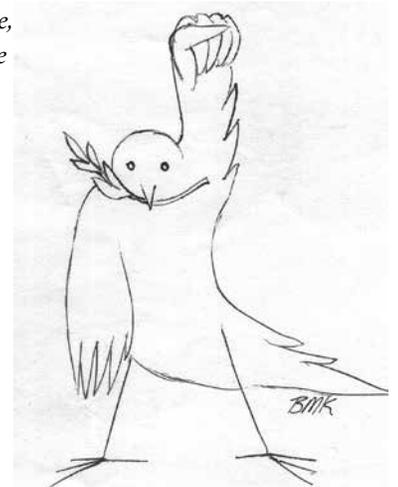
It was so disheartening to see how many millions of Americans voted for a man who showed nothing but contempt and disgust for our brothers and sisters. So much hatred and racism and fear mongering was poured out into the world...a direct contradiction to the Works of Mercy and the gospel imperatives. God waits and weeps.

The hardest job is not removing one racist from office or choosing Democrats over Republicans....it is repairing the Soul of our nation. It is forgiving the people who have flamed the fires of hate. It is in never

forgetting that only LOVE can overcome hate. It is in remembering (literally re- membering, rejoining) the Body of Christ of which we are all members.

Our Creator longs for us to live as one human family. Our prayer for all of you for this next year is that you may feel deeply connected to us, and to each other, as we move forward with fear and trepidation, but also with hope and wonder, to do the real work of Advent: to work as we wait for the continuing coming of Jesus. As [Howard Thurman](#) writes in his [Christmas poem](#)...

*When the song of the angels is stilled
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are
home,
when the shepherds are back
with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the
people,
to make music in the heart.Ω*



(Please see: Notes, p9)